

ideas which they attach to them. I am inclined to think that they look on them as the abodes of genii, always malignant, and requiring to be propitiated. In passing-such places they use a formula equivalent to "May God avert evil/' and it is common, as in Nubra and Ladak, to hang pieces of rag on such trees and stones as offerings to the *genius loci*.

They regard certain places as possibly haunted by spirits, always evil, and never those of the departed; but this can scarcely be termed a belief, as it is lightly held, and quite uninfluential, except in preventing them from passing such places alone in the darkness.

The opinions concerning God represent Him chiefly as a personification of a fate, to which they must bow, and as a Judge, to whom, in some mysterious way, they must account after death. Earthly justice appears to them as a commodity to be bought and sold, as among the Persians, or as it is among themselves, as severity solely, without a sentiment of mercy; and I have asked them often if they think that anything will be able to affect the judgment of the Judge of all, in case it should go against them. Usually they reply in the negative, but a few say that Ali, the Lieutenant of God, will ask for mercy for them, and that he will not be refused.

Of God as a moral being I think they have little conception, and less of the Creator as an object of love. Of holiness as an attribute of God they have no idea. Their ejaculation, " God is good," has really no

meaning.

Charity, under the term "goodness," they attribute to God. But they have no notion of moral requirements on the part of the Creator, or of sin as the breaking of any laws which He has laid down. They concern themselves about the requirements of religion in this life and about the future of the soul as little as is possible, and they narrow salvation within the limits of the Shiah sect.